



National
Operational
Guidance

Section

Fire and rescue service legislation



NFCC
National Fire
Chiefs Council

Developed and maintained by the NFCC



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In addition to their responsibilities under the [Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004](#), fire and rescue services must be aware of their responsibilities under other relevant legislation which consider the environment.

The Fire and Rescue Services (Emergencies) (England) Order 2007

The Order places a duty on fire and rescue services (in England) to have the capability to remove chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive contaminants from people at an emergency. There is also a duty to contain water used for decontamination for a reasonable time. Fire and rescue services must take steps to prevent or limit environmental damage when decontaminating people.

The [Fire \(Additional Function\) \(Scotland\) Order 2005](#) places a similar duty on the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, as does the [Fire and Rescue Services \(Emergencies\) \(Wales\) Order 2007](#) in Wales. See Section 1.6.6, [Environmental Protection Handbook](#).

Civil Contingencies Act 2004

As Category 1 responders, fire and rescue services are part of the multi-agency response to civil emergencies. The role of the fire and rescue service under the act is to save life, and to protect property and the environment. To be an 'environmental emergency' an incident must be one of the following:

- Contamination of land, water or air with a harmful biological, chemical or radioactive substance
- Flooding
- Disruption or destruction to plant life or animal life